

MAN WITH THE HOE AT WORK ON AN EPIC.

Edwin Markham Has Half Completed a Classical Poem Nearly the Length of "Paradise Lost."

Theme Is the Justification of Life, Its Period Modern and Its Conclusion Optimistic.

Has Labored Twenty Years on It, and Now Sees His Way Clear to Complete and Publish His Greatest Work.

Edwin Markham recently took the most important and significant step in his career. The poet of "The Man with the Hoe," realizing that his vogue has now all the marks of permanence, declared his literary independence by establishing his residence in the East—in No. 545 Third street, Brooklyn.

This also will be the first intimation to the literary world that the American poet whom Max Nordau recently compared to Milton has his own "Paradise Lost" more than half written. Even his publishers know nothing of the existence of the first half of an epic poem which Markham believes to be the conception upon which his fame will rest, upon which he has labored for twenty years and which he now sees his way clear to complete and publish.

Many Offers from Publishers. Markham is overwhelmed with offers from publishers. His volume of poems now is in its eighth edition, the last four being of 5,000 copies each. His publishers have voluntarily increased the usual large royalty which secured the right of publication. He does not attempt to write more than two short poems each month, but for these he receives much more than is realized by any of his contemporaries in this country.

He has refused the editorship of a new magazine, although he has accepted its policy and its finances are above reproach. An important publisher a few days ago tempted him with a proposition for a novel. But the poet was firm.

"I know how to break rocks," he said, "and I can do so, if necessary, but I will not enter a literary field unfamiliar to me—at least, not at present."

His Increased Income. A day or two ago the poet admitted to a friend that his income—which is from his writings alone—was six or seven times what he had ever before received. His volume containing "The Man with the Hoe" has just been published in London by the Harpord and Doubleday & Co. and now are preparing a special edition, profusely illustrated by Howard Chandler Christy, for the Christmas season. In a few months his second volume of short poems will be ready for the press.

In his new home, with work resumed on his great poem, Markham will be practically a recluse. He has decided to accept no invitations not to receive visitors except on one day of the month. This last night he will accept a very few intimate friends.

New Work Is Optimistic.

As "The Man with the Hoe" is the sermon on the Mount of Markham's literary ministrations, his great poem will embody the whole of his testament to his people. He says that there is only one theme for a great poem—the enigma of life. "This embraces the themes of Milton in 'Paradise Lost' and Dante in 'The Divine Comedy,' who attempted to justify God's attitude toward man. Markham's work will make an effort to justify life, and his conclusion—characteristic of all his work—will be optimistic. He will show that humanity is a unit. He will point out the varying phases, and will exhibit the misery and sorrow of the world with all the force at his command, will show that the principle referred to ultimately must be universal in its application.

He will show that life is good primarily, 'so the' it is within the power of humanity to make it appear good to every individual. That heaven, hell and all conditions are the natural result of law—none being arbitrary; that the universe is built on law, and that the heart of law is love. Humanity being a unit, its present state is due to the fact that it is not yet fully born. The present inequality in individuals is explained, and some assist the Almighty in bringing them into life, that some not only assist in their own bringing forth, but aid others, and that many, leaving all to God, lack the human assistance. The symbol of the latter class is 'The Man with the Hoe.'

His Hope in His Lyrics.

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WOMAN LOOKS A POOR

BOX THIEF IN A CHURCH.

Frank Welsh Caught Trying to Rob Church of St. John the Evangelist. 225

"Even the altars and the poor boxes in the churches are not safe from the desecrating hands of thieves," said Magistrate Meade in the Yorkville Court yesterday. The occasion for this remark was the arraignment of Frank Welsh, of No. 787 Elton avenue, on the charge of trying to break open and rob the poor box of the church of St. John the Evangelist, at Fifty-fifth street and First avenue.

Mrs. Coody, the woman employed in cleaning the church, saw Welsh trying to break open the box. She locked the door and caused his arrest. Welsh was remanded.

Eighteen-Once Baby Is Doing Well. The incubator baby, Marie Thelma de Long, is progressing nicely at her home at No. 148 West One Hundred and Fifth street. The child has shown constant improvement, and is now nearly as healthy as the other children in the family. The mother, Mrs. de Long, is a native of the South and is a devoted mother.

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